

Importance of mental health awareness raised by survey

3 years ago



With increasing concerns raised by workers in all settings, the FM sector's growing focus on mental health has been supported by a new study.

This resulted from the analysis of NHS data by the [YoungMinds](#) charity and revealed the number of children in mental health crises has reached record levels in England, with urgent referrals of under-18s having more than tripled in May 2023 (compared to May 2019).

Research conducted by [Unicef UK](#) has revealed parents too are experiencing difficulties managing the stress of their careers and family lives. Specifically, Unicef's latest survey showed the majority of parents said they felt overwhelmed (49%), anxious (43%), unsupported (36%) and lonely (26%) all or a lot of the time in the past 12 months. Supporting these findings, data from charity [Action for Children](#) reports 82% of parents are burnt out, with mothers being more at risk.

Parents in particular often experience mental health struggles due to the societal pressure put on them and their families to be 'perfect'. In response to this, [Headspace](#) has launched its Mindful Families content collection, offering support to those trying to navigate family life whilst also balancing their careers and their own mental wellbeing; as well as to children who are navigating a range of emotions as they age.

The content consists of a new Mindful Parenting collection which, in alignment with Headspace's deep commitment to supporting parents and families, was created to support the journeys of parents and caregivers, meet them in their most acute need-states, and help them realise their long-term parenting goals, all while recognising the many commitments they have to juggle outside of family life as well. The two content series 'Becoming a Mindful Parent' and 'Parenting Survival Guide' offer support on the big

picture of parenting, as well as giving 'acute state' resources for parents to navigate the day-to-day challenges such as feeling overwhelmed, losing their temper, and getting flustered.

Also within the new launch are two new series with Lily Singh's Adventures of Unicorn Island, and the second series of the Goodnight World! Podcast in partnership with Sesame Street. The Unicorn Island content incorporates mindfulness principles to help children gain emotional-regulation skills to make sense of challenges in their lives; and Sesame Street audio series uses meditation and mindfulness techniques to help little ones unwind during their bedtime routines, aiming to set them up for success in school and life.

Whilst having content available for families to access and obtain support whilst juggling family life with the ongoing work pressures, it is also crucial to acknowledge many parents might find themselves needing additional support at work too.

Burnout has been a common theme across the workplace for many years, with employees often reporting feelings of burnout and stress. This is often multiplied for parents who are not only burnt out at work, but at home, too. Headspace's 2023 Workforce Attitudes (WFA) report revealed that over a third of employees (35%) say they feel worse than they did last year in terms of their mental health. Therefore, as well as being worried about the children they have brought into the world, low job satisfaction and other work-related stressors are further contributing to the growing mental health crisis parents and caregivers are experiencing. The WFA report revealed 90% of caregivers within the workforce reported moderate to extreme stress over the past 12 months, with 76% of caregivers also being more likely to say they regularly use mental health benefits provided by their employer.

NHS waitlists for access to mental health services have reached record levels. Last year, Brits waited a total of over 5.4 million hours in A&E while experiencing a mental health crisis, and a quarter of patients are waiting 12 weeks or more for treatment. Delayed access to treatment can have a hugely detrimental effect on those in need which leads to further demands.

The company stated that digital, preventative mental health solutions are the only realistic option.

Earlier this year, it launched a full suite mental health solution by adding coaching and therapy to complement its existing meditation & mindfulness offering for organisations headquartered outside of the US.

From preventative care through 1000+ hours of self-guided meditation and mindfulness, to text-based behavioural coaching (available within two minutes) and therapy, employers can support mental health and well-being throughout an individual staff member's mental health journey, including when acute needs arise, with an emphasis on prevention and affordability.

As parents and caregivers work to cultivate a supportive home environment for their children's mental health, it's important they don't lose sight of their own wellbeing.